Final Evaluation Report

Making Multi-Sectoral Coordination Work: Collaborating towards better nutrition, food security and development for everyone

Prepared for: Nutrition and Food Security Alliance of Namibia (NAFSAN)

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Abbreviations

BCC Behaviour Change Communication

BMI Body Mass Index

CHWs Community Healthcare Workers

CSA Civil Society Alliance

CSOs Civil Society Organisations

CSR Corporate Social Responsibility

EPRI Economic Policy Research Institute

EU European Union

FGDs Focus Group Discussion

FNS Food and Nutrition Security

KIIS Key Informant Interviews

MoF Ministry of Finance

MoHSS Ministry of Health and Social Services

MTF Malnutrition Task Force

N4H Nutrition-for-Health

NAFSAN Nutrition and Food Security Alliance of Namibia

OPM Office of the Prime Minister

SUN Scaling Up Nutrition Movement

ToC Theory of Change

Executive Summary

Overview

The Nutrition and Food Security Alliance of Namibia (NAFSAN) is committed to significantly improving Namibia's highly vulnerable nutritional situation and food systems. It seeks to achieve this by effectively and sustainably strengthening multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral coordination, with a particular focus on civil society participation and the establishment of a private sector network. This approach follows the model of the global Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, of which Namibia has been a member since 2011. NAFSAN is Namibia's Civil Society Alliance (CSA) within the SUN Movement's Civil Society Network with the aim of enhancing the capacity of key civil society actors to engage meaningfully within the newly developed food security and nutrition (FNS) policy structures.

In December 2024, NAFSAN commissioned the Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI) to conduct an end-of-project evaluation titled "Making Multi-Sectoral Coordination Work: Collaborating Towards Better Nutrition, Food Security, and Development for Everyone." The evaluation, conducted between January and March 2025, almost covers the full implementation period from the 1st of December 2022 to the 31st of May 2025, with national coverage in Namibia and prioritising of the Omaheke, Hardap, and Otjozondjupa regions in which the novel Regional Hub-CSO concept was piloted.

The evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach, incorporating online in-depth interviews, in-person focus group discussions on national level and in one of the target regions, as well as a comprehensive document review to develop the evaluation findings and recommendations.

Key Findings

- 1. NAFSAN has been a key stakeholder in supporting efforts to address coordination challenges in Namibia's FNS sector: Stakeholder collaboration in the FNS sector (but also in other sectors) has been a persistent challenge. NAFSAN has played a key role in improving coordination and joint action, fostering and ensuring stronger collaboration between Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and government stakeholders.
- 2. NAFSAN has played a key role in amplifying CSO voices and ensuring their meaningful engagement with the government: NAFSAN has strengthened advocacy efforts, ensuring meaningful CSO engagement in FNS policy dialogues through information-sharing and capacity-building initiatives.
- **3. NAFSAN's engagement with the private sector remains limited:** Efforts to engage the private sector in FNS activities remain limited, with outreach primarily conducted through single events such as trainings and business breakfast meetings.
- 4. NAFSAN activities, particularly in the Omaheke region, have resulted in enhanced networking and coordination among stakeholders: The establishment of the Regional Hub-CSOs in Omaheke has enhanced networking and coordination among stakeholders. NAFSAN's support to the Malnutrition Task Force (MTF) in the region has also improved follow-up care for children recovering from malnutrition and could provide a model approach for other regions.

- 5. Through advocacy and capacity-building activities, NAFSAN has contributed to improved stakeholder awareness and strengthened coordination mechanisms: By conducting workshops, meetings, and engagements, especially with parliamentarians and media professionals, NAFSAN has improved stakeholder awareness and coordination. Information-sharing via WhatsApp, NAFSAN's website and social media channels has further strengthened engagement.
- 6. The overall impact of NAFSAN's work on public awareness and engagement has been limited: While printed materials (e.g., leaflets) have been distributed to raise public awareness, mainly during trainings and through its members, their overall impact has been limited within communities due to the underlying structural social and economic problems causing malnutrition which cannot be overcome by information alone.
- 7. The Regional Hub-CSO model has demonstrated strong potential for sustainability and replicability: This model has shown promise for long-term sustainability and scalability by improving multi-sectoral collaboration, resource efficiency, and reducing duplication of efforts.
- 8. Capacity-building activities have strengthened national and regional capacities in assessing and addressing FNS challenges: Trainings such as *Nutrition-for-Health (N4H)*, has provided government, CSO stakeholders and community health workers with the necessary knowledge, awareness and skills to identify nutrition-related issues and to design and implement appropriate interventions in Namibia.
- 9. The lack of adequate human and financial resources is the main risk identified to the sustainability of efforts: While the Regional Hub model has strong potential, greater understanding of 'coordination vs. implementation' as well as sustained funding is needed to support regular communication, reporting, coordination, networking, and training activities.
- 10. Structured coordination mechanisms, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, play a critical role in bringing stakeholders together and ensuring collaboration among them: Clearly defined roles and responsibilities among stakeholders enhance collaboration, reduce confusion, and improve efficiency and accountability.
- **11. Continuous and consistent engagement is crucial to building trust:** NAFSAN's success in coordinating FNS efforts has been its persistent efforts to engage stakeholders on an ongoing basis, fostering relationships built on transparency, reliability, and mutual respect
- **12. Capacity-Building for effective participation:** Strengthening the technical capacity of stakeholders ensures more meaningful participation in FNS coordination efforts.
- **13. Strengthening resource mobilisation efforts is essential for sustainability:** Financial constraints remain a significant challenge, limiting the expansion of NAFSAN's coordination efforts. Strengthening resource mobilisation is critical in sustaining the progress made.
- **14. Stronger inter-sectoral coordination, especially in linking FNS efforts to social protection programmes, is required to achieve sustainable FNS outcomes:** Current efforts to improve FNS outcomes are constrained by siloed approaches and limited understanding of how to link nutrition with other sectors. FNS efforts must be better linked, among others, to social protection programs and broader economic development strategies to achieve sustainable outcomes.

Recommendations

- 1. Extend the presence of Regional Hub-CSOs across the country aligned with government efforts: Strengthen the presence of Regional Hub-CSOs across Namibia to enhance coordination, implementation, and sustainability of FNS efforts at both national and subnational levels.
- 2. Strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration, particularly private-sector engagement in the FNS sector: Foster stronger collaboration between CSOs, government ministries, and private-sector actors to unlock Namibian resources, technical expertise, and investments that support FNS initiatives, with a focus on early childhood development.
- **3. Expand advocacy and capacity-building efforts nationally on FNS issues:** Expand FNS advocacy and training initiatives nationwide, using a decentralised approach to equip local stakeholders with the knowledge and skills needed for effective interventions.
- 4. Create a multi-channel approach for driving meaningful public action and behavioural change in the FNS sector: Leverage media, community outreach, and partnerships with key influencers to drive meaningful behavioural change and public action on FNS issues.
- 5. Develop a strong resource mobilisation strategy to enable long-term sustainability for the Regional Hub-CSOs and other NAFSAN activities: Diversify funding sources, secure long-term financial support, and strengthen fundraising capacities to ensure the financial stability of NAFSAN, Regional Hubs, and various FNS initiatives.
- 6. Advocate for and support inter-sectoral approaches to addressing FNS issues: Strengthen collaboration between FNS initiatives and economic opportunities, ensuring adequate leadership and inclusion of key ministries in decision-making to create sustainable, long-term food security solutions. Advocate for stronger inter-ministerial collaboration on nutrition-related issues to effectively address the multi-sectoral determinants influencing nutrition outcomes.

1. Introduction

Namibia launched its National FNS Policy in December 2021, accompanied by an Implementation Action Plan and Coordination Structures. These documents and systems serve as critical national development frameworks. However, their implementation remains complex and ongoing. Coordination and execution have consistently posed significant challenges for the Namibian government across multiple sectors.

NAFSAN's official mandate as a CSA and technical partner to government is to enhance Namibia's highly vulnerable nutritional situation and food systems by sustainably strengthening multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral coordination capacity. It prioritises civil society participation, information development/sharing and advocacy, as well as the establishment of a private-sector network, following the model of the global SUN movement, of which Namibia has been a member since 2011.

With funding from the European Union (EU), NAFSAN implemented the project "Making Multi-Sectoral Coordination Work: Collaborating Towards Better Nutrition, Food Security, and Development for Everyone." This initiative aimed to enhance the capacity of key civil society actors to engage meaningfully in the newly developed FNS policy structures, both at the national level and regionally in three selected regions: Omaheke, Hardap, and Otjozondjupa. The project supported NAFSAN and civil society organisations under its umbrella by facilitating information sharing, networking, and coordination efforts. It also strengthened their participation in policy dialogues, advocacy initiatives, and decision-making processes at both national and regional levels.

This document presents the final evaluation findings and recommendations conducted for the project. The report begins by outlining the project's purpose, objectives, and scope, in line with the proposal approved by NAFSAN. The following section details the evaluation methodology, including key questions and data collection methods. The findings are presented in the fourth section, followed by recommendations based on the analysis. Finally, the annexes include data collection protocols and the finalised Theory of Change (ToC).

2. Purpose, Objectives and Scope

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this end-of-project evaluation is to conduct a thorough evaluation of NAFSAN's project, "Making Multi-Sectoral Coordination Work: Collaborating towards Better Nutrition, Food Security, and Development for Everyone." This evaluation aims to capture the overall effectiveness of the project, examining how well it met its intended goals, the relevance of its approach, and the level of success in achieving sustainable impacts. By assessing the project's design, execution, and adaptability, NAFSAN seeks to understand both the direct and indirect benefits delivered to the food and nutrition sector in Namibia and to identify key elements that could inform the development of similar future initiatives. The evaluation will also provide a basis for improving multi-sectoral coordination, fostering collaboration across stakeholders, and identifying lessons that can strengthen Namibia's food security and nutrition landscape.

1.2. Objectives and Evaluation Questions

The evaluation has the following objectives:

- Assess whether the project's design and scope were aligned with NAFSAN's mission, Namibia's food security and nutrition priorities, and the global SUN Movement objectives.
- Review the extent to which the project's planned activities and objectives were implemented
 and the degree to which the intended outcomes were achieved, including responsiveness to
 operational challenges.
- Measure the project's impact in strengthening multi-sectoral coordination within Namibia's food and nutrition sector, particularly through NAFSAN's efforts in collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and civil society mobilisation.
- **Identify and document significant lessons learned**, challenges encountered, and good practices developed through the implementation of the project.
- Assess the extent and quality of stakeholder engagement, especially the participation of CSOs within government structures, and their involvement in policy development and advocacy efforts.
- Evaluate the potential for sustaining the project's impacts beyond its duration, including NAFSAN's role as a civil society umbrella body, and identify elements that could be scaled or replicated.
- Assess the project's specific contributions to reducing hunger and improving nutrition in Namibia's education sector, particularly through efforts in schools and Early Childhood Development Centers.

Table 1 below presents the evaluation questions that guided this project:

Table 1. Evaluation questions and criteria

Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-questions	Criteria
1. To what extent does the project align with food and nutrition security related needs of Namibia, especially in terms of engaging and connecting CSOs, establishing regional hubs, and involving the private sector to support multi-sectoral coordination and improve collaboration?	 1.1 To what extent does the project address the specific challenges and needs related to coordination and collaboration for improving food-security and nutrition in Namibia? 1.2 How relevant is the project's approach to multi-sectoral coordination in the context of Namibia's policy landscape and civil society needs? 	Relevance

Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-questions	Criteria
2. To what extent has the project achieved its objectives, particularly in enhancing networking, advocacy, and public awareness of food security and nutrition issues?	2.1 How effectively has the project engaged CSOs, established regional hubs, and worked with government at national and regional level in advancing food and nutrition objectives in line with government's nutrition policy, agenda and initiatives? 2.2 To what extent has the project been effective in increasing public knowledge and interest about nutrition and food security? 2.3. How successful did the project approach the private sector towards the establishment of a Namibian business network on nutrition-related issues?	Effectiveness
3. To what extent are the project's outcomes likely to be sustained or scaled beyond the project's duration, particularly in terms of enhanced capacity, established networks, and public awareness?	3.1 To what extent are some of the project's successful components replicable or scalable in other regions or sectors to improve coordination and collaboration, as well as improve overall food and nutrition security in Namibia?	Sustainability
4. What are the key lessons and good practices that have emerged from the project in improving multi-sectoral coordination and CSO engagement in Namibia's food and nutrition landscape?	4.1. What are the good practices identified from the project in increasing coordination and collaboration among civil society organisations but also in relation to other key stakeholder groups, such as academia, government and private sector, as well as international development partners (including UN agencies)?	Good practices and lessons learnt

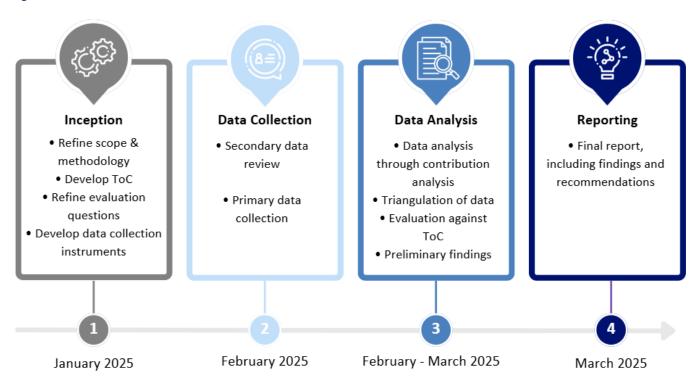
1.2. Evaluation Scope

The evaluation encompasses temporal and geographical dimensions. The **temporal scope** spans December 2022 to February 2025. The **geographical scope** focuses on Namibia, with a particular emphasis at both national and regional levels. At the national level, the evaluation examined how the project engaged with key stakeholders across Namibia, including national government bodies, CSOs and the private sector, to strengthen food security and nutrition in the country. At the regional level, the evaluation gave specific attention to the project's work in the Omaheke, Hardap, and Otjozondjupa regions. By evaluating the project's effectiveness in these areas, the study assessed the regional adaptations made to address local needs and the extent of community-level impact

3. Evaluation Phases and Methodology

The evaluation consisted of four main phases, as shown in Figure 1, spanning across January - March 2025.

Figure 1. Evaluation Phases



2.1. Phase 1: Inception

The **Inception phase** fulfilled several purposes, including the refinement of evaluation questions, the development of KIIs and FGDs protocols, and the development of a ToC. Starting the project, the Evaluation Team conducted an **inception call** to align the project's evaluation questions and coordinate the receipt of relevant documents for desk review. Based on the primary desk research and consultation with NAFSAN staff and members, EPRI updated the evaluation questions to prioritise three criteria: **relevance**, **effectiveness**, **and sustainability** and one research question to focus on the **good practices** and **lessons learnt**.

EPRI conducted **desk review** of key project documents provided by NAFSAN, including interim reports, meeting minutes, annual reports, newsletters and case studies. The desk review also considered publicly available materials detailing the government's agenda on food security and nutrition, as well as other relevant resources. Insights gained from the initial desk review were helpful in guiding the development of data collection protocols and of a ToC, which can be found in <u>Annex A</u> and <u>Annex B</u> respectively. An Inception Report was produced and submitted as the main deliverable for this phase.

2.2. Phase 2: Data collection

Following the inception phase, EPRI undertook online and in-person data collection activities, which are summarised in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Data Collection Activities

Primary research activities	Stakeholder / Subject	Number of research activities	Modality
Document review	Annual reports, mid-term review reports, and other relevant project documents	> 50 documents	Online
Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)	NAFSAN, CSOs, Private sector, Government	5 online KIIs	Online
Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)	Beneficiaries, government, CSOs	3 FGDs in Omaheke (1 with beneficiaries, 1 with governments and 1 with CSOs)	In-person

In this phase, EPRI continued the **document review** of project documents and publications from relevant stakeholders, partner organisations, and any supplementary resources that provided context on Namibia's FNS landscape and multi-sectoral coordination efforts. Also, the team conducted **five online KIIs** with key stakeholders at the national level, including representatives from government, CSOs, EU and private sector actors engaged in advancing Namibia's food security and nutrition outcomes at the national level. Lastly, EPRI conducted **three in-person FGDs in Omaheke** on February 12 and 13, 2025. The three FGDs were conducted with CSOs working in the region, project beneficiaries - particularly those in the soup kitchen as part of the novel post-discharge strategy that NAFSAN helped to develop and regional government stakeholders. The CSO and government FGDs included approximately 5-8 participants, and the beneficiary FGD with about 18 participants to capture a range of perspectives. The final list of stakeholders interviewed can be found in **Annex C**.

2.3. Phase 3: Data analysis

In the data analysis phase, EPRI adopted a mixed-methods approach that aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the cases and to understand and test causal propositions. All primary qualitative data collected through KIIs and FGDs were transcribed and analysed by the evaluation team. Furthermore, EPRI triangulated information and sources to validate propositions and test explanations for the success of the intervention. The triangulating methodology consisted of process tracing and contribution analysis, involving a systematic examination of diagnostic evidence that is both carefully selected and analysed in light of the evaluation questions and the ToC. Based on the analysed data and captured insights, a presentation of preliminary findings was conducted to NAFSAN on March 18, 2025. The meeting aimed at gathering feedback and validating the findings that are presented in this report.

2.4. Phase 4: Reporting

Building on the presentation and validation of the preliminary findings, the evaluation team produced this report, aimed at summarising key findings, good practices, and practical recommendations to support future project implementation and long-term impacts beyond the project's timeframe.

4. Key Findings

The key findings of this evaluation are structured according to the evaluation questions in the sections below.

3.1. Evaluation Question 1: Relevance

To what extent does the project align with the food and nutrition security-related needs of Namibia, especially in terms of engaging and connecting CSOs, establishing regional hubs, and involving the private sector to support multi-sectoral coordination and improve collaboration?

Finding 1: NAFSAN has been a key stakeholder in supporting efforts to address coordination challenges in Namibia's FNS sector.

Food and nutrition security are multisectoral issues that require continuous collaboration and

coordination to address the complex challenges contributing to hunger and vulnerability. Achieving sustainable food and nutrition security depends on ongoing efforts to ensure that diverse sectors work together effectively, leveraging shared information, resources, and expertise to design and implement impactful solutions. However, in Namibia, coordination has long been a persistent challenge, not only but especially in the FNS sector. Efforts are often fragmented, resulting in inefficiencies and missed

"I think one of the biggest problems is people working in silos. Everybody is working on the issue but not talking to each other, meaning there's a lot of overlapping"- CSO Key Informant from Omaheke

opportunities for collaboration, which hinder progress toward sustainable FNS solutions.

The National Nutrition Plan for Namibia explicitly highlights the importance of "strengthening intersectoral coordination mechanisms" as essential for effective and efficient policy implementation. This project, as validated by key informants, has directly contributed to this strategy by enhancing coordination and joint action, ensuring that CSOs and government entities work together more effectively to address FNS challenges. Through various activities implemented under the project, including knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, and technical support, NAFSAN has significantly strengthened stakeholder engagement, enhancing the national FNS response. Stakeholders perceive these efforts as having improved coordination within and between sectors, fostering greater

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¹ Government of Namibia (2021). Revised National Food and Nutrition Security Policy. Retrieved from: https://scalingupnutrition.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/national-nutrition-plan-namibia.pdf

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collaboration among diverse actors. This has helped ensure that stakeholders are working towards a shared goal, rather than in fragmented and isolated efforts. In addition, NAFSAN has continuously advocated for structural improvements within the government and increased the capacity of coordinating bodies—particularly by positioning the National FNS Secretariat under the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) as the custodian of the FNS policy, and by strengthening the Secretariat's capacity through the assignment of a multidisciplinary team from various government ministries, development partners, and NAFSAN as a civil society alliance.²

Finding 2: NAFSAN has played a key role in amplifying CSO voices and ensuring their meaningful engagement with the government

NAFSAN has played a key role in amplifying CSO voices and ensuring their meaningful engagement with

"NAFSAN serves as both a coordinator and a representative of CSOs, particularly within various working groups focused on food and nutrition security."-Government Key Informant

the government, especially within FNS policy dialogues. CSOs in Namibia face multiple challenges in effectively participating in policy discussions, including limited dissemination and public availability of research findings or draft policy documents, which restricts CSOs' ability to highlight policy gaps and advocate for both new policy initiatives and policy revisions. Additionally, limited information-sharing among relevant

organisations often leads to duplication of efforts, which can weaken credibility and reduce goodwill from decision-makers. Engaging in policy development and more coordinated implementation processes also requires substantial financial and human resources, including funding for stakeholder forums, consultancy services, and media outreach. Furthermore, CSOs need dedicated, capable, and resilient staff who can navigate the prolonged policy negotiation process, which can take months or even years.³

Recognising these challenges, NAFSAN has actively supported CSOs by strengthening advocacy, information-sharing, and knowledge dissemination, including developing a brief background on Namibia's Nutrition and Food Security landscape and other practical information to understand nutrition-related challenges and what can be done to address them. At the national level, NAFSAN has facilitated CSO participation within the National Secretariat and its associated working groups, ensuring that civil society voices are included in key FNS policy discussions. It has also strengthened parliamentary and media engagement, equipping CSOs with platforms to advocate for policy changes and raise public awareness on FNS issues. Additionally, NAFSAN has provided evidence-based advocacy support, helping CSOs effectively communicate policy gaps and influence decision-making processes.

At the regional level, NAFSAN has played a critical role in strengthening coordination structures. A major milestone has been the establishment of Regional Hub-CSOs in Omaheke, Hardap and Otjozondjupa, which has provided a structured mechanism for CSO representation in policy dialogues. These hubs have enhanced coordination among local stakeholders, ensuring that FNS challenges are addressed in a more systematic and collaborative manner.

² NAFSAN. (2023). Interim Narrative Report

³ Horizont 3000 (2020). CSOs & Policy Dialogue: A Manual for Civil Society Organizations in East Africa. Retrieved from: https://shorturl.at/XtdKa

At the national level, by facilitating CSO engagement with the **National Planning Commission**, NAFSAN has played a crucial role in the development of the **Multi-Stakeholder Malnutrition Intervention Report** in Omaheke, from February to April 2024. This report provided critical evidence to inform coordination of FNS policy activities and more collaborative interventions in the region, strengthening data-driven decision-making and ensuring that policy responses are aligned with the realities on the ground.⁴

Through this effort, NAFSAN has reinforced and demonstrated a positive role that CSOs can play as partners to government, hereby shaping regional strategies, fostering a more inclusive and evidence-based approach to addressing food security and nutrition challenges in the region as well as nationally.

Finding 3: NAFSAN's engagement with the private sector remains limited.

The importance of the private sector in promoting nutrition and food security in Namibia is reflected in NAFSAN's theory of change, as increasing the involvement of Namibian businesses in nutrition-related initiatives is expected to contribute to long-term improvements in the country's nutrition situation and food systems. To achieve this,

"The private sector participation is limited, and the government has difficulties coordinating with them. NAFSAN can play a key role in facilitating public-private partnerships". Government Key Informant

NAFSAN has focused on three key activities with the private sector: i) engaging Namibian businesses as active members of NAFSAN, ii) facilitating the establishment of a Namibian Business Network integrated into the FNS structure, and iii) encouraging businesses to make nutrition-related commitments as part of their operations and broader community initiatives.

To initiate engagement with Namibia's private sector, NAFSAN organised business breakfast meetings as an entry point for discussions with companies' staff on the country's critical food and nutrition security challenges and the role businesses can play. These engagements covered contents on the importance of wellness programmes, strategic Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and better coordination of existing initiatives to support FNS objectives. Another key initiative led by NAFSAN was the Wellness at Work Survey 2024, which was the first of its kind in Namibia and aimed to track progress and expand private sector involvement in workplace nutrition and wellness. 5 Findings identified several areas for improvement, particularly in the support available for breastfeeding mothers, including workplace breastfeeding spaces and maternity leave return policies. The survey also pointed to gaps in nutrition counselling for the prevention and management of lifestyle diseases and a need for more structured health risk assessments covering indicators such as elevated Body Mass Index (BMI), cholesterol, and cancer screenings. Additionally, mental health and stress management initiatives, including financial literacy and work-life balance support, were identified as areas requiring greater attention. NAFSAN also conducted nutrition-focused training sessions for businesses, including two-day interactive Nutrition for Health training sessions, focusing on employee wellbeing and behavioural change covering topics such as malnutrition, healthy eating, child nutrition, WASH, food safety, and composting. After finalising its Nutrition-for-Health (N4H) approach and mass-printing of N4H materials NAFSAN, together with some of its member organisations, increased its outreach to the private sector.

⁵ NAFSAN. (2024). Outcomes - Wellness at Work Survey 2024. Retrieved from: https://cloud.nafsan.org/SurveyAug24.pdf
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⁴ Office of the President. (2024). Report on the Multi-Stakeholder Malnutrition Intervention

However, there have been **limited results in securing private sector involvement in supporting FNS outcomes and engaging with other stakeholders**. NAFSAN's efforts in this area are still in the early stages, with limited success of the outreach to private sector actors. The main engagement activities, such as trainings and business breakfast meetings, **have been sporadic**. Although some private sector actors could be persuaded to became involved in the Omaheke region, their engagement remains rather limited, isolated and not yet well-coordinated, while overall government - civil society engagement also remains minimal and would need to increase at regional level in Omaheke.

Although few companies have received training on nutrition issues and NAFSAN has established partnerships with some private sector actors, it remains unclear to what extent they are independently adopting NAFSAN's recommendations in the workplace in a sustainable manner or have significantly increased their investment into FNS activities or early childhood development activities.

Interviewed stakeholders, including CSO and government representatives, suggested that NAFSAN should expand its role beyond initial outreach and awareness efforts to drive concrete commitments and sector-wide policy changes. This includes clearly outlining the next steps for establishing the business network and enhancing proactive engagement with businesses. The anticipated establishment of a dedicated Think Tank in this regard is seen as a step in the right direction. Additionally, NAFSAN should prioritise facilitating stronger government engagement with the private sector, actively coordinating multi-stakeholder platforms, and ensuring effective collaboration between all involved actors. This is particularly important in defining the role of businesses within working groups and fostering structured, results-driven engagement.

3.2. Evaluation Question 2: Effectiveness

To what extent has the project achieved its objectives, particularly in enhancing networking, advocacy, and public awareness of food security and nutrition issues?

Finding 4: NAFSAN activities, particularly in the Omaheke region, have resulted in enhanced networking and coordination among stakeholders.

In Namibia, **limited networking and coordination** have been repeatedly highlighted by stakeholders as a challenge, with organisations often working in silos and limited opportunities for relevant actors to align their strategies and mandates. To address this gap, **NAFSAN** has made significant strides in strengthening collaboration within the **FNS sector**, particularly in Omaheke, where its efforts have led to enhanced engagement among CSOs and other stakeholders. A key achievement has been the **establishment of two Regional Hub-CSOs in Omaheke**, which serve as platforms for CSOs to collaborate, share resources, and improve coordination. One of the core activities within one of these hubs was the systematic **mapping of food security initiatives by CSOs** to ensure that existing efforts are recognised, connected, and built upon. Recognising the need to foster constructive engagement among local organisations, NAFSAN has facilitated several **regional meetings** to bring CSOs together in Omaheke and to ensure links to government structure and programmes, where appropriate. These engagements have enabled participants to learn about key nutrition issues, establish connections, and develop joint strategies and actions. Notably, the discussions revealed that some **community-based initiatives** are already integrating multiple aspects of FNS, such as soup kitchens combined with gardening, early

childhood development, and childcare services, demonstrating the potential for multi-sectoral approaches to addressing food security and nutrition. In addition to networking efforts, NAFSAN has strengthened **knowledge-sharing initiatives**, including its **newsletter** distributed via Mailchimp, which highlights the work of NGOs and provides updates on key FNS developments. These efforts have improved information exchange among stakeholders, creating a more connected FNS community.⁶

Additionally, NAFSAN has provided **critical support to Omaheke's MTF** in the development of a post-discharge strategy, helping to ensure that children recovering from severe acute malnutrition receive adequate follow-up care. This has included co-leading **a multi-stakeholder investigation in Omaheke** to conduct a rapid assessment of malnutrition hotspots in communities and health facilities, gathering critical information on the situation on the ground. Based on this assessment, NAFSAN facilitated the development of the **post-discharge strategy** for the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS), which aimed at preventing readmissions and new cases of malnutrition, assisted the region in refining its communication and behaviour change strategy, and supported the creation of a costed response plan covering key areas necessary to address both visible and underlying malnutrition-related challenges.⁷

However, despite these successes, significant coordination challenges remain, particularly at the regional levels. While foundational structures for civil society coordination exist through the Regional Hub-CSOs and the MTF, direct engagement between these entities has been limited. Additionally, both the MTF and CSOs face distinct operational challenges that further complicate coordination efforts.

Political factors also play a role, as the MTF is a governor-led initiative — initiated by the Omaheke Governor in 2022, which has inadvertently limited CSO engagement to that of a 'junior' partner. In practice, projects under the MTF are often implemented with minimal involvement from CSOs, reducing opportunities for meaningful collaboration. This dynamic has created a disconnect between the two structures, reinforcing parallel efforts rather than fostering a cohesive, multisectoral approach. Addressing these challenges requires deliberate efforts to create inclusive coordination mechanisms that ensure CSOs play an active role in shaping and implementing FNS initiatives alongside the MTF. As a trusted stakeholder, NAFSAN is well-positioned to bridge this gap by facilitating stronger collaboration between the MTF and the Regional Hub. NAFSAN's recent inclusion as an official MTF member and suggestion made by the MTF's chairperson to have NAFSAN as one of the Task Force's vice-chairs alongside MoHSS's Regional Office, marks a positive step toward strengthening these foundational structures and enhancing coordination efforts.

Finding 5: Through advocacy and capacity-building activities, NAFSAN has contributed to improved stakeholder awareness and strengthened coordination mechanisms.

Beyond its networking efforts, NAFSAN has played a critical role in building **stakeholder awareness and advancing coordinated advocacy** in the FNS sector. Its advocacy priorities have encompassed a range of issues, including the need for better sectoral coordination, the protection of aquifers, the case for a universal basic income, the links between malnutrition and non-adherence to HIV and/or TB treatment,

⁶ NAFSAN. (2023). Interim Narrative Report: Dec 2022- Nov 2023

⁷ NAFSAN. (2024). Report on the Multi-Stakeholder Malnutrition Intervention. Retrieved from: https://www.nafsan.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Report Omaheke-Feb2024 12Mar2024-submitted.pdf

the impact of government-subsidised high sugar consumption on obesity, the promotion of home garden strategies, and the importance of child feeding and breastfeeding practices and rights.

At the national level, NAFSAN has focused on advocacy and particularly improving stakeholder awareness, participating in various workshops, meetings, and engagements aimed at improving nutrition and food security. Notably, interactions with parliamentarians, including members of both the National Assembly and National Council, have proven highly impactful. In November 2023, NAFSAN engaged with three Parliamentary Standing Committees, explaining various forms of malnutrition and their negative impact on the development of individuals, communities, and on Namibia's socio-economic development. Parliamentarians expressed strong interest in key nutrition information and advocacy

"Our involvement within the Regional Hub-CSO model, supported by NAFSAN, has allowed us to assist not only those who actively seek help but also those who lack the energy or initiative to do so. By working collaboratively with COHENA, OCDF, and government stakeholders, we strengthened our reach and impact, ensuring that even the most vulnerable receive the support they need"- CSO Key Informant from Omaheke

points presented by NAFSAN, and requested for in-depth workshops on these topics, indicating a growing recognition of FNS issues at the legislative and policy level.8

NAFSAN is also a key stakeholder participating in all six working groups: i) Nutrition, ii) Food Security, iii) Water, Sanitation and Environment, iv) Advocacy, Communications and Mobilisation, v) Operational Research, and vi) Integrated Data Systems, and in the high-level Inter-Agency Committee (FNS-IASC). Although NAFSAN is not leading any working groups, they are recognised as an active and influential actor, which makes contributions, links activities across working groups, helps drafting minutes and reports, develops key documents, such as chapters for Namibia's sixth National Development Plan (NDP6), and facilitating advocacy activities to improve stakeholder awareness.

Another key achievement at the national level has been NAFSAN's engagement with the media, which has led to increased journalist interest in reporting on nutrition-related topics. Journalists have not only sought to cover FNS issues more frequently but have also shown a particular interest in seeking more expert opinions from CSOs and in practical, community-based nutrition initiatives.⁹

In the three regions where the project is being implemented, NAFSAN has prioritised direct engagement and capacity-building initiatives with government decision-makers and key CSOs. Through its role as a facilitator and advocate, NAFSAN has actively worked to enhance stakeholder awareness and improve coordination on FNS-related challenges. For example, in May 2024, NAFSAN convened stakeholders in the Otjozondjupa region to assess existing coordination structures and identify opportunities for strengthening multisectoral collaboration on malnutrition. As a direct outcome, the Governor committed to facilitating engagement with major private sector actors, including six mining and charcoal companies, as well as large-scale maize producers, to mobilise corporate social responsibility contributions towards FNS initiatives. 10 Additionally, with support from the Commonwealth Foundation,

⁸ NAFSAN. (2024). April Newsletter. Retrieved from: https://mailchi.mp/nafsan/newsletter-02

⁹ NAFSAN Interim Narrative Report. (2023). unpublished

¹⁰ NAFSAN. (2024). December Newsletter. Retrieved from: https://mailchi.mp/nafsan/newsletter-4-key-actions Evaluation of NAFSAN's initiatives: Making Multi-Sectoral Coordination Work: Collaborating towards better nutrition, food security and development for everyone

NAFSAN conducted a N4H training workshop and Nutrition Dialogues¹¹ among different CSOs in the region, while a similar workshop for all Regional Councillors and key decision-makers is being planned to

further strengthen local capacity to address malnutrition effectively.

In the Omaheke region, NAFSAN has also facilitated public discussions, disseminated informational materials through its website, WhatsApp groups and other social media platforms, and actively participated in multistakeholder meetings to foster dialogue and build stronger partnerships.

Furthermore, through collective efforts and partnerships with the Commonwealth Foundation, WHO Namibia and the Capricorn Foundation, NAFSAN delivered the N4H training

"The capacity-building provided through the N4H training for over 100 community workers enhanced collaboration by equipping them with the knowledge and skills to discuss nutrition and assess nutritional needs. It wasn't just about working together: it was about ensuring that stakeholders could engage meaningfully in FNS efforts with a stronger understanding of nutrition-related challenges." *CSO Key Informant from Omaheke*

in six regions, equipping over 500 government staff and community health workers and CSOs with the knowledge and tools needed to assess and respond to FNS challenges more effectively.

With the persistent challenge of malnutrition across the country, these steps represent important progress but remain insufficient. In particular, at the regional level, NAFSAN's efforts are concentrated in specific areas. For example, in the Omaheke region, initiatives are primarily focused on Gobabis, with minimal outreach to other constituencies. To establish a truly multisectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism that effectively addresses the complex challenges of malnutrition, NAFSAN's activities should be expanded to ensure broader regional coverage and engagement.

Finding 6: The overall impact on public awareness and engagement has been limited.

NAFSAN has actively worked to enhance **public awareness** through various channels, including the **development and distribution of printed materials** such as leaflets. Its **website and social media** platforms are consistently updated, with a significant increase in followers and subscribers over the course of the project. These platforms provide key nutrition data on Namibia, including information shared with the EU, as well as free access to N4H training materials, nutrition-related videos, documents on early childhood development linked to the RightStart initiative, and reports from past activities.¹² **Calls to action, updates on key events, and announcements for webinars** are also regularly shared to encourage public engagement. NAFSAN has also secured visibility through **official media appearances**, including features on national television, participation in two national radio shows, and coverage in three newspaper articles. These efforts have aimed to ensure that critical nutrition information reaches relevant audiences and contributes to shaping public opinion.

¹¹ Nutrition Dialogues. (2024). Coming Together for Better Nutrition in Central Namibia. Retrieved from: https://nutritiondialogues.org/dialogue/55159

¹² NAFSAN. (u.d). Media Material. Retrieved from: https://www.nafsan.org/own-media-materials
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While these materials have been informative, their impact on **public awareness has been limited**. Effective social and behaviour change communication (BCC) interventions, reinforced by positive social norms and consistent messaging over time, are essential for driving meaningful change. However, public engagement efforts have been largely ad hoc, lacking structured approaches to improve dietary and caregiving practices that address the root causes of malnutrition. Notably, the post-discharge strategy initiative is currently in its pre-pilot stage, showing promising signs of progress, with parents reporting increased awareness and a better understanding of nutrition, however, hampered in reality by their socio-economic situation. Similarly, the permaculture garden initiative has contributed to raising public awareness. Integrating such initiatives with a well-structured BCC strategy can ensure more sustainable improvements in nutrition awareness and drive lasting behaviour change at the community level, if combined with meaningful livelihoods and social protection programmes.

3.3. Evaluation Question 3: Sustainability

To what extent are the project's outcomes likely to be sustained or scaled beyond the project's duration, particularly in terms of enhanced capacity, established networks, and public awareness?

Finding 7: The Regional Hub-CSO model has demonstrated strong potential for sustainability and replicability.

The **Regional Hub-CSO model** has demonstrated strong potential for long-term sustainability, scalability, and institutionalisation by fostering a structured and coordinated platform for CSOs working on FNS. This model strengthens multi-sectoral collaboration, enhances resource efficiency, and prevents duplication of efforts, ensuring that interventions are more strategically aligned and complementary rather than fragmented or competing. A key strength of the Hub-CSO model is its ability to streamline coordination between government structures, CSOs, and development partners, creating a functional and responsive ecosystem for tackling FNS challenges. By formalising engagement mechanisms and building synergies among CSOs, the model enhances collective impact and improves the sustainability of interventions.

NAFSAN has played a key role in advancing this model in the Omaheke region by mapping and mobilising relevant CSOs operating in the FNS sector, facilitating structured engagement through meetings and workshops, and strengthening coordination mechanisms to align CSO efforts with government priorities.

Over the past few months, NAFSAN has successfully managed to mobilise local resources from Namibia's private sector and worked in a practical, solutions-driven manner to support the post-discharge strategy, hereby demonstrating how structured coordination can directly improve service delivery and impact. By engaging CSOs one-on-one to assess needs and opportunities before convening them in larger coordination forums, NAFSAN has helped create a more cohesive and effective network of actors working on FNS.

The value of this model is evident in its impact on partnerships and service delivery. Organisations such as **Light of Children** have emerged as critical actors in bridging gaps in essential services, particularly in resource-constrained communities. The Hub-CSO model enables these organisations to work more efficiently and effectively, ensuring targeted support reaches those who need it most. Furthermore,

NAFSAN has facilitated collaboration between the Hub and the Malnutrition Task Force, strengthening the alignment of local community-based interventions with national and regional FNS strategies.

Given its demonstrated potential for sustainability and replication, the Hub-CSO model should be further strengthened and scaled across regions. As the government moves to establish regional working groups on FNS issues, it is critical that the expansion of Regional Hubs is aligned with and integrated into existing government structures to promote inclusive, multi-sectoral governance and effective coordination.

To ensure long-term impact, NAFSAN should advocate for the formal inclusion of Hub-CSOs within regional working groups (e.g. as vice-chair), the expansion of their role in policy engagement and evidence generation, and the strategic use of digital tools and platforms to enhance coordination, data sharing, and real-time decision-making among CSOs, government

"That's exactly what we need: hubs where people can communicate, access support, and where organisations or CSO can connect with another. These hubs also provide opportunities to learn from one another, making shared experiences invaluable. While we have been working on this independently, our collaboration with NAFSAN, particularly in focusing on food security, has been crucial. It is essential to replicate this model."- *Private Sector Key Informant*

actors, and development partners. The Regional Hub-CSO model, by fostering partnerships, building stakeholder capacity, and driving collective action, has the potential to fundamentally transform the way FNS challenges are addressed—making interventions more effective, inclusive, and sustainable.

Finding 8: Capacity-building activities have strengthened local expertise in assessing and addressing FNS challenges.

Capacity-building has been a central component of NAFSAN's sustainability efforts, equipping key stakeholders with the knowledge and tools necessary to assess and respond more effectively to FNS challenges. A flagship initiative in this regard has been the N4H training, which focused strongly but not exclusively on community health workers, has provided government and CSO stakeholders, with the necessary skills to identify nutrition-related issues and implement appropriate interventions. ¹³ The N4H training was developed collaboratively since 2021, in close collaboration with GIZ Namibia's Farming-for-Resilience (F4R) project, government ministries, universities, and UN organisations. The training adopts a comprehensive and highly interactive approach that includes all relevant aspects of nutrition and food security in Namibia in very engaging and practical ways. NAFSAN aims to continue to expand the training and reach over one million Namibians over the next five years (by 2030) through various implementing organisations, i.e., NAFSAN's members and partners, who will integrate it into their respective projects and programmes. The N4H training and other capacity-building programmes help improve service delivery at the local level by enhancing technical expertise and fostering a more coordinated response to malnutrition and food insecurity.

Furthermore, NAFSAN has expanded its capacity-building efforts to engage a broader range of stakeholders, recognising the critical role of media in shaping public awareness and policy discussions

¹³ NAFSAN. (u.d). Nutrition-for-Health (N4H). Retrieved from: https://www.nafsan.org/n4h/
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on FNS. In August 2023, to ensure the dissemination of accurate and relevant nutrition-related information, NAFSAN hosted an **interactive media workshop** with 15 journalists from various media houses. The event aimed to introduce NAFSAN's work, provide an update on Namibia's current FNS landscape, and discuss the policies and systems in place to address the country's significant malnutrition and food insecurity challenges. Beyond raising awareness, the event served as a platform for journalists to deepen their understanding of different forms of malnutrition, the importance of balanced diets and diverse food groups, and the need for greater collaboration between nutrition (health) and food security/food systems (agriculture). By strengthening journalists' capacity to grasp the complexities of malnutrition and FNS, the workshop contributed to more frequent, accurate, and in-depth media coverage of these critical issues in national news.

Engagement with parliamentarians and regional policymakers has also been a key aspect of NAFSAN's **advocacy-driven capacity-building**, ensuring that policymakers are well-informed about critical nutrition challenges and the policy actions needed to address them. These efforts have played a **crucial role** in strengthening **local expertise** on how to **assess and respond to FNS challenges effectively**. The benefits of these trainings extend beyond the immediate project period, as they help embed **improved knowledge and practices** within key institutions.

Finding 9: The lack of adequate human and financial resources is the main risk identified to the sustainability of efforts.

The sustainability of multisector collaboration and coordination efforts —despite their significant

by insufficient investment in time and resources. One of the biggest hurdles to maintaining and expanding coordination platforms is the need for dedicated funding and personnel to facilitate continuous stakeholder engagement. While the roles of CSOs and government stakeholders are clearly defined, ensuring consistent participation in coordination mechanisms remains a challenge. A common issue is the failure of stakeholders to attend regular meetings despite prior commitments and reminders. This lack of engagement is often attributed to overwhelming workloads, limiting stakeholders' ability to take on additional responsibilities.

"The biggest challenge is funding. From a government perspective, it is often very difficult for the government to allocate funds directly to an NGO or a private entity. This limitation significantly impacts the sustainability of initiatives"-Government Key Informant

For CSOs, resource constraints, particularly financial, are even more pronounced. The operations of Regional Hub-CSOs and other coordination initiatives have largely relied on funding secured by NAFSAN. While some CSOs have contributed through application fees as a long-term sustainability measure, these **funds are insufficient to maintain ongoing coordination activities.** The Regional Hub model holds great promise, but its long-term viability hinges on securing sustained funding to support regular coordination, networking, and capacity-building initiatives.

[.]

Strengthening resource mobilisation efforts will be critical to ensuring that both NAFSAN and its established networks can maintain and expand their work. Securing financial commitments from the government for coordination activities will require **targeted advocacy with key stakeholders**, including the National Planning Commission (NPC), the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), and the Ministry of Finance (MoF). At present, engagement with MoF remains minimal, even within government-led structures such as the FNS Council and the regional MTF. Establishing clear advocacy efforts to secure government buy-in, particularly from the MoF and other relevant institutions, will be essential in integrating the Hub's coordination activities into national and regional frameworks. Developing a **comprehensive resource mobilisation strategy** for the Regional Hubs will also be essential to ensuring financial sustainability and long-term impact. This strategy should include diversifying funding sources, such as securing government support, forging partnerships with international donors, engaging the private sector, and leveraging community contributions. Exploring innovative financing mechanisms and building fundraising capacity of CSOs within the Hub will further contribute to long-term sustainability.

3.4. Evaluation Question 4: Good Practices and Lessons Learned

What are the key lessons and good practices that have emerged from the project in improving multisectoral coordination and CSO engagement in Namibia's food and nutrition landscape?

Finding 10: Structured coordination mechanisms, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, play a critical role in bringing stakeholders together and ensuring collaboration among them.

One of the key takeaways from NAFSAN's work is that **structured coordination mechanisms** play a **critical role** in bringing stakeholders together. Prior to the establishment of the **Regional Hubs**, many FNS actors were working **in silos**, resulting in **fragmented efforts and inefficiencies**. By providing a **formal space** for cooperation, NAFSAN has improved **the alignment of efforts**, ensuring that organisations collaborate towards shared goals rather than working in isolation.

Widely regarded as a legitimate platform, the Hubs have empowered CSOs to amplify their voice in engagements with the government and in Omaheke with the MTF. It has also facilitated **knowledge-sharing**, allowing stakeholders to exchange good practices and evidence-based approaches, which has contributed to improving the quality of FNS interventions. Furthermore, by fostering **joint planning and decision-making**, the Hubs have strengthened coordination, ensuring that stakeholders' priorities and activities are better integrated. This structured approach has led to stronger collaboration between CSOs, government bodies, and other FNS actors, demonstrating that well-designed and structured coordination mechanisms are critical for multi-sectoral interventions.

Another good practice that has emerged is the **importance of defining stakeholder roles and responsibilities** within coordination structures. When each actor understands their specific contributions, coordination becomes more effective, reducing confusion and improving efficiency. It also strengthens accountability, ensuring that commitments made during coordination meetings are followed through, with organisations better equipped to track progress, measure outcomes, and identify areas that require additional support. In addition, defining clear roles has facilitated **better use of existing resources**, as stakeholders can focus on their strengths rather than spreading themselves too

thin across multiple areas. For example, CSOs with expertise in community mobilisation can take the lead in grassroots engagement, while government agencies can focus on policy formulation and regulatory oversight. This division of responsibilities ensures that coordination efforts are not only efficient but also complementary, maximising the impact of FNS interventions.

Finding 11: Continuous and consistent engagement is crucial to building trust

Trust is a foundational element of effective coordination and collaboration, and building trust among stakeholders requires continuous and consistent engagement over time. One of the key factors that has contributed to NAFSAN's success in coordinating FNS efforts has been its **persistent efforts** to engage stakeholders on an ongoing basis. Rather than relying on ad hoc interactions, NAFSAN has prioritised **regular engagement** with CSOs, government bodies, and development partners, fostering relationships built on transparency, reliability, and mutual respect.

By maintaining an open line of communication with stakeholders, NAFSAN has positioned itself as a **trusted and neutral convener** who is always open to cooperation and is capable of bringing diverse actors together. This credibility has been crucial in ensuring that stakeholders feel comfortable participating in coordination efforts and contributing meaningfully to discussions.

Furthermore, the consistent engagement of stakeholders has led to increased buy-in from government institutions and donors, who recognise the value of a well-coordinated FNS sector. As a result, CSOs have become **more actively involved in national FNS dialogues**, and their contributions are increasingly being integrated into policy discussions. The lesson here is that coordination is not a one-time effort: it requires ongoing investment in relationships, communication, and trust-building.

Finding 12: Capacity-building drives effective participation in coordination activities

Capacity-building plays a fundamental role in strengthening stakeholder engagement in FNS coordination efforts. Without the necessary technical knowledge and skills, stakeholders may struggle to contribute effectively to discussions and decision-making processes. Recognising this, NAFSAN has conducted training aimed at enhancing the capacity of government officials and CSOs. For example, NAFSAN's Nutrition-for-Health training has provided key stakeholders with a stronger technical foundation, equipping them to assess and address FNS challenges more effectively. According to NAFSAN's newsletter of March 2025, more than 530 staff and volunteers were trained as N4H facilitators, with estimations pointing out an impact on over 50,000 community members across all 14 regions of Namibia. Strengthened technical expertise leads to more informed decision-making, with discussions and interventions increasingly grounded in evidence-based approaches. Moreover, capacity-building initiatives help create a network of FNS champions who actively contribute to coordination efforts at different levels. These individuals serve as focal points within their respective organisations, helping to ensure continuity and institutional knowledge within FNS coordination structures.

However, one area of capacity building that was identified yet that may need further attention in the future related to methods and skills directly related to coordination and the effective facilitation of multistakeholder workshops, meetings and other forms of engagements.

Finding 13: Strengthening resource mobilisation efforts is essential for sustainability.

One of the biggest challenges to sustaining coordination efforts is the lack of dedicated financial resources. While NAFSAN has managed its available resources efficiently, financial constraints have limited the expansion and deepening of its activities. A critical lesson is that without a clear resource mobilisation strategy, existing coordination platforms and CSO engagement efforts risk becoming unsustainable. Without adequate resources, even the most effective coordination structures may struggle to maintain momentum. Relying solely on short-term or donor-dependent funding can create uncertainty, making it difficult to plan for long-term engagement and institutional strengthening.

Finding 14: Stronger inter-sectoral coordination, especially in linking FNS efforts to social protection programmes, is required to achieve sustainable FNS outcomes.

Food and nutrition challenges are inherently multi-sectoral, driven by a range of interconnected factors that exacerbate outcomes. Limited access to nutritious food and safe water remains a critical issue in Namibia, often compounded by poverty, inadequate livelihood opportunities, and economic instability. Additionally, poor healthcare access, inadequate sanitation and hygiene, climate change, and weak social protection systems further undermine efforts to achieve food security and improved nutrition. Tackling these challenges requires a comprehensive, coordinated approach that integrates efforts across sectors, including health, agriculture, social protection, and economic development. Strengthening multi-sectoral collaboration and ensuring sustained investment in resilient food systems are essential to fostering long-term improvements, particularly for vulnerable communities.

A key lesson learned is the **pressing need for stronger inter-sectoral coordination**. FNS interventions must be integrated into broader economic and social development strategies to drive lasting impact. Government ministries frequently function in sectoral silos, with programmes designed and implemented with minimal intersectoral coordination or integration with the nutrition sector. Traditionally in Namibia, FNS efforts have focused narrowly and somewhat in isolation on food availability, food access, nutrition education, and WASH. For example, the soup kitchen model in Omaheke, which provides food as part of the post-discharge strategy, started integrating gardening, nutrition education and awareness into the food distribution, but it does not yet adequately address the nutritional needs of breastfeeding mothers or the high rates of alcohol abuse and addiction, underscoring the need for more holistic interventions. Given that food insecurity and malnutrition are rooted in poverty, it is crucial to establish stronger linkages between directly FNS-related initiatives, psycho-social support systems and livelihood opportunities that enhance economic security.

Namibia's RightStart Campaign, which focuses on raising awareness of the importance of nurturing care in the early years of a child's life, is a step towards bringing cross-sectoral stakeholders to collaborate and coordinate further for achieving nutritional outcomes. However, there is also a need to strengthen partnerships with economic ministries, financial institutions, and the private sector to transform FNS interventions from short-term food assistance into sustainable economic empowerment initiatives. For instance, smallholder farmers and local food producers can benefit from improved market access, financial services, and capacity-building opportunities that enhance productivity and financial stability.

¹⁵ RightStart Namibia. (u.d). Early Childhood Development. Retrieved from: https://www.rightstart.com.na/
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5. Recommendations

The evaluation findings suggest potential pathways for consideration in strengthening the impact and sustainability of NAFSAN's initiatives focused on improving coordination and collaboration among stakeholders working in FNS sector, which are detailed in the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Extend the presence of Regional Hub-CSOs across the country, aligned with government efforts.

While the government increasingly recognises the urgent need to address malnutrition and food insecurity, its efforts to strengthen regional initiatives have been limited—particularly in establishing Sub-National Secretariats in line with the coordination structure outlined in the FNS policy. The Regional Hub-CSO model has significant potential to support future Sub-National Secretariats and their associated working groups, enhancing coordination and implementation efforts.

A key recommendation emerging from this evaluation is the **need to expand the Regional Hub-CSO model** to additional regions to ensure a broader, more sustained impact, while at the same time continuing advocacy with government for adequately positioning and strengthening not only the National FNS Secretariat but to also establish and capacitate adequate regional coordination structures.

Strengthening the presence of regional hubs will not only reinforce much needed coordination at the regional level but also enhance implementation at the local level, where interventions are most needed. Given the diverse food security and nutrition challenges across Namibia's regions, any expansion should be designed with flexibility to accommodate local contexts. Tailoring Hub activities to regional priorities will be essential for maximising their effectiveness and long-term sustainability. To ensure the continued success of the Hub, alternative strategies for sustaining operations should be explored. These may include diversifying funding sources through additional donor support, integrating Hub activities into national or regional government frameworks to secure institutional funding, and leveraging partnerships with the private sector. Strengthening local ownership and embedding the Hubs within existing governance structures could also help maintain its long-term viability, even in the absence of external financial compensation. NAFSAN can also support in facilitating platforms for regular interaction, knowledge exchange and peer-learning among Hubs from different regions.

Recommendation 2: Strengthen private-sector engagement in the FNS sector.

NAFSAN has established itself as a **trusted convener** in the FNS sector, bringing together diverse stakeholders to drive collective action. Currently, private-sector involvement in Namibia's FNS sector remains limited and fragmented, yet it presents significant opportunities to strengthen existing efforts. NAFSAN is well-positioned to bridge the gap between the private sector, government, and CSOs through advocacy, networking, and structured dialogue. By **fostering stronger private-sector engagement**, NAFSAN can help unlock new resources, technical expertise, and innovative solutions to address FNS challenges. With its technical expertise, NAFSAN can facilitate meaningful collaboration between businesses and policymakers, ensuring that private-sector investments align with national FNS priorities.

Encouraging partnerships between CSOs and key industry players - including food producers, agribusinesses, retailers, and social enterprises - through the Regional Hub model can enhance the sustainability and impact of food security and nutrition initiatives. Such collaborations could drive investments in local food processing, improve supply chains to reduce food waste, and support the development of fortified or nutrient-rich food products for vulnerable populations. Additionally, private-sector actors can play a critical role in community-based food initiatives by leveraging corporate social responsibility programs and impact investment mechanisms, ultimately contributing to long-term food security and improved nutrition outcomes in Namibia.

Recommendation 3: Expand advocacy and capacity-building efforts nationally on FNS issues.

Advocacy and capacity-building efforts are essential to strengthening national capacity and build political will, and NAFSAN has made significant progress in advancing FNS advocacy and capacity-building initiatives, particularly in the Omaheke region. Investing in these areas has been instrumental in establishing foundational structures for coordination and enhancing efforts to address the growing malnutrition crisis across the country. **Expanding these initiatives to other regions would enable a broader network of CSOs, government actors, and community groups to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to drive meaningful FNS improvements.**

Raising awareness among key stakeholders—particularly government actors—is essential to highlighting the underlying socio-economic and structural determinants of malnutrition. Many affected populations face precarious living conditions that significantly contribute to poor nutritional outcomes. Without a clear understanding of these root causes, there is a risk of perpetuating narratives that stigmatise individuals, attributing malnutrition to personal behaviours such as poor hygiene, transactional sex or alcohol consumption in informal settlements. Sensitising government stakeholders to the lived realities of vulnerable communities is therefore critical to designing and implementing effective, equitable nutrition strategies that have meaningful national impact.

Decentralising capacity-building efforts through a training-of-trainers model, as currently implemented by N4H, would allow for more tailored interventions that address the specific FNS challenges unique to each region. In addition to expanding geographically, capacity-building efforts should also be adapted to meet the diverse needs of stakeholders. For example, providing targeted training for local government officials on integrating FNS into policy frameworks, equipping community health workers with practical skills in nutrition-sensitive interventions, and supporting CSOs in enhancing their advocacy strategies could all contribute to more effective and sustainable FNS programming.

Recommendation 4: Create a multi-channel approach for driving meaningful public action and behavioural change in the FNS sector.

Public awareness is a crucial driver of FNS improvements, but raising awareness alone is not enough: it must be accompanied by targeted **actions that lead to behavioural change**. Currently the engagement of NAFSAN and the Hub-CSO to raise public awareness is limited.

There is a need for NAFSAN to adopt a multi-channel approach that strategically combines mass media, community outreach, and policy advocacy to shift attitudes and practices related to food security and nutrition to maximise impact. The possibility of NAFSAN playing a key role in supporting communication and public information on healthy diets within the RightStart Namibia campaign—which focuses on early childhood development and supporting parents of young children across the country—would be a major stepping stone in this regard. The information disseminated must then also be context-specific, i.e. relevant to the realities of target populations and actionable within the constraints of their living conditions and should be translated and delivered in all relevant local languages, including the various local languages. A key element of this approach would be leveraging radio, television, and social media platforms to communicate evidence-based messages on nutrition and healthy diets. This could be complemented by community engagement activities such as interactive workshops, community discussions, and school-based awareness programmes that encourage dialogue and participation at the grassroots level. Additionally, partnerships with religious organisations, traditional leaders, and local influencers could help amplify key messages and foster community ownership of FNS initiatives. By investing in a well-coordinated public engagement strategy, NAFSAN can move beyond information dissemination and create sustained behavioural change that supports food security and nutrition goals.

Recommendation 5: Develop a strong resource mobilisation strategy to enable long-term sustainability for the Regional Hub-CSOs and other NAFSAN activities

Effective coordination and collaboration require sustained financial and human resources to support ongoing activities that strengthen multi-stakeholder engagement—often demanding significant staff time for attending meetings, communicating outcomes, and coordinating information and activities. Ensuring the long-term sustainability of NAFSAN's work, particularly the Regional Hub-CSOs requires a well-defined and proactive resource mobilisation strategy. While NAFSAN has effectively utilised its existing resources, financial constraints remain a significant challenge in scaling up and deepening its impact. Local CSOs, despite viewing their membership contributions as a long-term investment in strengthening their work, have limited financial capacity to further support NAFSAN and the regional Hubs. However, to sustain the Hubs' activities and facilitate the expansion of this concept to other regions, a diversified funding approach is essential—one that reduces reliance on short-term donor funding and ensures financial stability.

To achieve this, NAFSAN and CSOs should **actively explore multiple funding avenues**, including securing government support through engagement with the Ministry of Finance, seeking long-term programme funding from international development agencies, and leveraging private-sector contributions.

Strengthening fundraising and proposal development capacities within the Hubs will also be crucial in navigating funding opportunities and securing resources aligned with strategic priorities. Additionally, developing **comprehensive resource mobilisation strategies** for the Hubs will be key to ensuring sustained financial resilience and impact.

Recommendation 6: Advocate for and support inter-sectoral approaches to addressing FNS issues.

A comprehensive FNS strategy must extend beyond food access and nutrition interventions to address the root causes of food insecurity, particularly economic vulnerability.

Adopting an inter-sectoral approach is essential to ensuring sustainable outcomes and preventing vulnerable communities from falling back into insecurity once interventions conclude. This requires stronger linkages between FNS initiatives and economic and livelihood opportunities, including income-generating activities, improved market access and social protection programmes.

FNS efforts in Namibia continue to be siloed, with a weak and seemingly wrong-positioned National FNS Secretariat (with no proper convening power), contributing to limited inter-sectoral discussions and the absence of key ministries such as the Ministry of Education, and MoHSS from critical decision-making processes. NAFSAN and the Regional Hubs should continue to play a proactive role in supporting the government in strengthening inter-sectoral coordination to ensure FNS is integrated across sectors.

For instance, NAFSAN can support in promoting long-term food security by advocating for expansion of income-generating opportunities, greater government investment in FNS initiatives tied to economic development, and ensure vulnerable communities receive sustainable solutions beyond short-term food aid, e.g. through innovative socio-economic transformative approaches, such as a Universal Basic Income (UBI), where NAFSAN already undertook important research in collaboration with the London School of Economics. Strengthening these connections and ongoing advocacy efforts is crucial for shifting from reactive food security responses to long-term resilience-building efforts that empower communities and promote sustainable livelihoods.

Annexes

Annex A. Data collection instruments

KII protocol

General questions

- In your view, what are the most pressing food and nutrition security challenges in Namibia?
- What has been your involvement with NAFSAN on improving coordination and collaboration among stakeholders working on issues related to food and nutrition, both nationally and regionally?
- How has NAFSAN facilitated collaboration among CSOs, government, private sector, academia, and international development partners?

Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-questions	KII Questions for Government	KII Questions for NAFSAN, EU, Private Sector
Namibia, especially in	1.1 To what extent does the project's approach address the specific challenges and needs related to coordination and collaboration for improving food-security and nutrition in Namibia?	 In your opinion, what are the key challenges to effective coordination and collaboration among stakeholders working on FNS in Namibia, at national level and in the 14 regions? How has NAFSAN supported efforts to improve coordination and collaboration among stakeholders working on FNS in Namibia? Can you provide specific examples? What gaps, if any, remain in stakeholder coordination, particularly between the government and CSOs, both at national level, as well as in Namibia's 14 regions? 	 stakeholders working on FNS in Namibia? 2. How has NAFSAN supported efforts to improve engagement of and coordination/collaboration among stakeholders working on FNS in Namibia? Can you provide specific examples? 3. What gaps, if any, remain in terms of coordination among stakeholders, and how could the situation be improved?

Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-questions	KII Questions for Government	KII Questions for NAFSAN, EU, Private Sector
		4. How can NAFSAN further support efforts to improve coordination and collaboration between the government and other relevant stakeholders?	
	1.2 How relevant is the project's approach to multi-sectoral coordination in the context of Namibia's policy landscape and civil society needs?	 5. How has NAFSAN engaged parliamentarians and policymakers on critical aspects of FNS? 6. Does NAFSAN's coordination approach complement existing government efforts on FNS issues? Why or why not? 	 5. How relevant is NAFSAN's approach to engaging private sector, CSOs and other key stakeholders working on issues related to FNS in Namibia? 6. How have NAFSAN's activities, including technical assistance, developing materials, facilitating workshops, or other capacity-building activities, supported or strengthened coordination capacity among stakeholders? 7. How would you describe NAFSAN's strategy towards partnerships to enhance coordination and what are possible challenges related to implementing this strategy?
2. To what extent has the project achieved its objectives, particularly in enhancing networking, advocacy, and public awareness of food security and nutrition issues?	2.1 How effectively has the project engaged CSOs, established regional hubs, and worked with government at national and regional level in advancing food and nutrition objectives in line with government's nutrition policy, agenda and initiatives?	 How has NAFSAN supported the engagement with CSOs in FNS efforts at the policy-making and implementation level? What has worked well, and what challenges have emerged? How has NAFSAN collaborated with government stakeholders to improve coordination and collaboration on FNS issues at the national and regional levels? How does the government engage with the Regional Hub-CSOs on FNS issues, and what challenges, if any, are faced in coordinating and collaborating with these regional hubs? 	 8. How has NAFSAN engaged with stakeholders in FNS efforts, including advocacy and networking? What has worked well, and what challenges have emerged? 9. Has NAFSAN been successful in establishing regional hubs to strengthen FNS coordination? How effective were these hubs in enhancing networking and advocacy of FNS issues? 10. What challenges are these Hub-CSOs facing in coordination, and what will improve their functionality and effectiveness around coordination in future?

Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-questions	KII Questions for Government	KII Questions for NAFSAN, EU, Private Sector
	2.2 To what extent has the project been effective in increasing public knowledge and interest about nutrition and food security?	 10. What strategies has NAFSAN used to raise public awareness about food security and nutrition issues? 11. How effective have these awareness-raising efforts been? Can you provide examples of increased public interest or FNS-related behavioural changes? 12. Which of NAFSAN's key advocacy points are you aware of, and how successful would you say NAFSAN's advocacy efforts have been? 13. How can NAFSAN and CSOs further support the government in enhancing public awareness and engagement? 	online information sources been in raising public awareness?
	2.3. How successful did the project approach the private sector towards the establishment of a Namibian business network on nutrition-related issues?	 14. How successful has NAFSAN been in engaging the private sector in making investments into FNS-related issues in Namibia? 15. How far has NAFSAN supported the establishment of partnerships between the government and the private sector on FNS issues? 16. How does the government engage with NAFSAN around the establishment of a nutrition-focused business network, and what role can these networks play in implementing FNS initiatives in companies, workplaces, communities and society in general? 	 15. How successful has NAFSAN been in engaging the private sector in FNS-related areas? 16. Have any business networks been formally or informally established as a result of the project? If so, how effective have they been? 17. What challenges exist in involving private sector actors in nutrition initiatives? 18. What additional steps could be taken to strengthen private sector engagement?

	Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-questions	KII Questions for Government	KII Questions for NAFSAN, EU, Private Sector
3.	To what extent are the project's outcomes likely to be sustained or scaled beyond the project's duration, particularly in terms of enhanced capacity, established networks, and public awareness?	3.1 To what extent are some of the project's successful components replicable or scalable in other regions or sectors to improve coordination and collaboration, as well as improving overall food and nutrition security in Namibia?	 17. What are some successful components of NAFSAN's approach to establishing partnerships between the government and CSOs to address FNS issues? 18. Do you see potential for these successful components to be replicated or scaled in other regions or sectors? Why or why not? 19. What role should NAFSAN play in sustaining these efforts? 	 19. What are some successful components of NAFSAN's approach to engaging CSOs and other relevant stakeholders in addressing FNS issues? 20. Do you see potential for these successful components to be replicated or scaled in other regions or sectors? Why or why not? 21. What role should NAFSAN play in sustaining these efforts, and which other stakeholders and/or partners should be involved?
4.	What are the key lessons and good practices that have emerged from the project in improving multi-sectoral coordination and CSO engagement in Namibia's food and nutrition landscape?	4.1. What are the good practices identified from the project in increasing coordination and collaboration, among civil society organisations but also in relation to other key stakeholder groups, such as academia, government and private sector, as well as international development partners (including UN agencies)?	 20. Can you identify any particularly effective strategies or good practices from NAFSAN's interventions to support the implementation of the FNS policy, particularly around improving coordination and collaboration? 21. What recommendations do you have for future initiatives aiming to strengthen multi-sectoral coordination in Namibia's FNS landscape? 	 22. Can you identify any particularly effective strategies or good practices from NAFSAN's interventions to support the implementation of the FNS policy, particularly around improving coordination and collaboration? 23. What recommendations do you have for future initiatives aiming to strengthen multi-sectoral coordination in Namibia's FNS landscape?

FGD protocol for CSOs and beneficiaries in Omaheke

Evaluation Questions	Sub-evaluation Questions	OECD-DAC Criteria	CSOs Beneficia Stakeholders	aries - Soup Kitchen?
the project align with food and nutrition security related needs of Namibia, especially		Relevance	NAFSAN has started to coordinate various stakeholders in a regional hub since beginning of 2024. 1.1. Do you observe any change in terms of coordination between stakeholders engaged with nutrition? Who are the main stakeholders engaged by NAFSAN? 1.2 What are the challenges you face in terms of coordination and collaboration between stakeholders engaged within nutrition? 1.3. How crucial is NAFSAN's coordination for regional stakeholders? How does the regional hub relate to the Malnutrition Task Force? 1.4 Has NAFSAN organised national and regional workshops to facilitate engagement of stakeholders? 1.5 What capacity-building initiatives have NAFSAN organised to develop capacities of CSOs and other stakeholders? 1.6. At what level are beneficiaries needs and priorities addressed? At each organisation or are their concerns also voiced at the regional hub level?	1.1. How did you first hear about the soup kitchen / gardening project? 1.2. Have you notice any change in the running of the soup kitchen in the last year? (Improvements / challenges) 1.3. What do you think about the food / products of the soup kitchen / gardening? 1.4. Do you know who is involved in the organisation of the soup kitchen / gardening project?

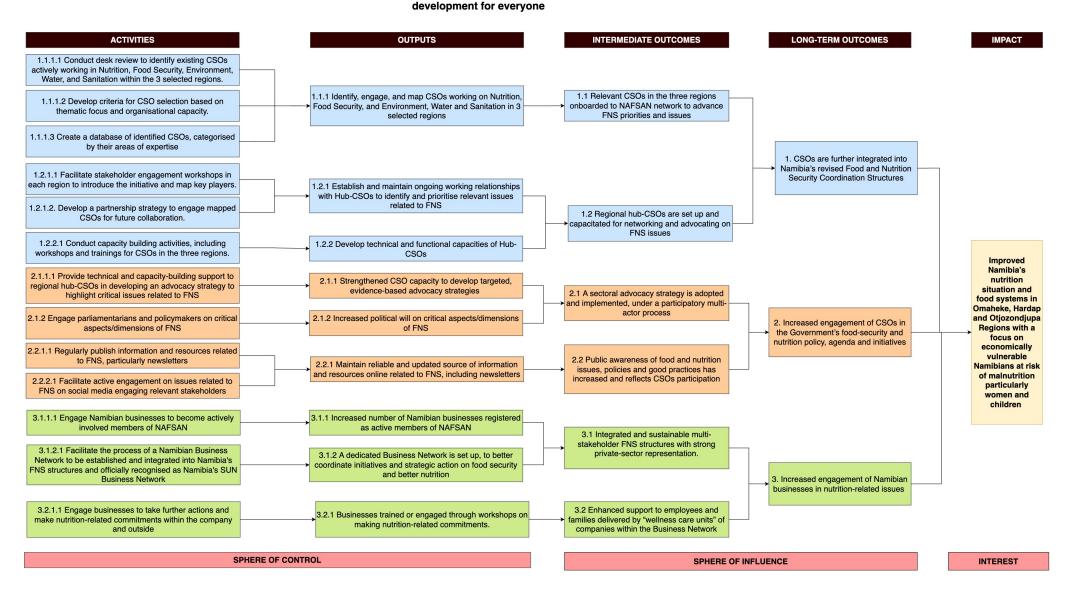
Evaluation Questions	Sub-evaluation Questions	OECD-DAC Criteria	CSOs Stakeholders	Beneficiaries - Soup Kitchen?
the project achieved its objectives, particularly in enhancing networking, advocacy, and	2.1 How effectively has the project engaged CSOs, established regional hubs, and worked with government at national and regional level in advancing food and nutrition objectives in line with government's nutrition policy, agenda and initiatives? 2.2 To what extent has the project been effective in increasing public knowledge and interest about nutrition and food security? 2.3. How successful did the project approach the private sector towards the establishment of a Namibian business network on nutrition-related issues?	Effectiveness	 2.1. How well has NAFSAN coordinated the various stakeholders in the region? Has the coordination helped to achieve the food-security and nutritional objectives of your organisation / of your ministry / of the government? 2.2 Has the NAFSAN coordination helped to raise public awareness about malnutrition and in your opinion has the public knowledge increased on how to deal with malnutrition and food insecurity? 2.3. Has the NAFSAN coordination improved contact with businesses and the private sector? If yes, how? 	 2.1. Did you notice any change in the running of / quality of food / organisation of the soup kitchen / garden in the last year or so? 2.2. How do you receive information on nutrition? (via the soup kitchen, in public, social media etc.) 2.3. Did you notice more involvement from businesses or private sector in the soup kitchen?

F	Evaluation Questions	Sub-evaluation Questions	OECD-DAC Criteria	CSOs Stakeholders	Beneficiaries - Soup Kitchen?
4.	the project's outcomes likely to be sustained or scaled beyond the project's duration, particularly in terms	3.1 To what extent are some of the project's successful components replicable or scalable in other regions or sectors to improve coordination and collaboration, as well as improving overall food and nutrition security in Namibia?	Sustainability	3.1. How do you see the way forward in terms of NAFSAN, the CSO-Hub and the coordination in the region? Do you see potential for an increase in coordination? What supports and hinders coordination? 3.2. Do you have experience in other regions? Can the coordination as practised here in Omaheke be successful in other regions as well or what would need to be done differently?	3.1. Did you experience disruption in the provision of food / running of the gardening project in the past? Are you worried about it in the future? What do you think could be done to make it more reliable? 3.2. Do you hear / know about soup kitchens/gardens in other regions in Namibia? Are they similar / differently organised?
5.	What are the key lessons and good practices that have emerged from the project in improving multi-sectoral coordination and CSO engagement in Namibia's food and nutrition landscape?	4.1. What are the good practices identified from the project in increasing coordination and collaboration, among civil society organisations but also in relation to other key stakeholder groups, such as academia, government and private sector, as well as international development partners (including UN agencies)?	- Good practices and lessons learnt	4.1. What went well in the coordination, what was difficult or needs adjustment? Are there specific needs of different stakeholders that need to be taken into account? e.g. Civil society, government, businesses, community activists, beneficiaries?	4.1. What works well with the soup kitchen / gardening project? 4.2. Do you have suggestions how to improve the soup kitchen / gardening project?

Annex B. ToC

NAFSAN TOC:

Making Multi-Sectoral Coordination Work: Collaborating towards better nutrition, food security and



Annex C. List of stakeholders who participated in KIIs and FGDs

Name of stakeholders who participated in KIIs	Organisation	Туре
Ben Scherrnick, Director	NAFSAN	NAFSAN
& Maria Kandjungu, Manager: EU-Project		
Herve Rousseau	EU	Donor
Project Manager		
Ben Haraseb	MAWLR	Government
Head of the NFNS National Secretariat		
Fulgentia Mayira,	OPM	Government
Deputy Director: Special Projects, incl. NFNS		
Marsia Reed,	Lithon	Private sector
Lithon HR & Head of Lithon Foundation	Foundation	

Stakeholders who participated in FGDs

Туре	NAME OF PARTICIPANTS
 CSOs: CoHeNa Light for The Children Steps for The Children OCDF DRFN Walvisbay Corridor Group 	Moses Mberira Henk Olwage Louisa Kaavara Ritunee Mbauka Belinda Thanises
Parents: Soup kitchen beneficiaries- Val en Opstaan.	Mee Johanna Nakale
Malnutrition Task Force + Staff: governor`s office.	Sr. E. Kaune Rhona-Lee Visagie